

ADDRESS

OF

THOMAS GOLD, ESQ.

President of the Berkshire Agricultural Society,

AND MEMBER OF THE

MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

BERKSHIRE ASSOCIATION,

FOR THE PROMOTION OF

Agriculture and Manufactures,

AT PITTSFIELD, OCT. 3d, 1816.

— * —
" Quid faciat lætas segetes : quo sidere terrani .
Vertere Mæcenæ, ulmisq; adjungere vites
Conveniat : quæ cura boum, qui cultus habendo
Sit pecori ;
Hinc canere incipiam."

VIRG. GEO. LIB. I.

— * —
TOGETHER WITH THE

Report of the Committee on Agriculture,

AND THE ADDRESS OF

ELKANAH WATSON, Esq.

PREVIOUS TO DECLARING THE PREMIUMS REPORTED.



PITTSFIELD :

PRINTED BY PRINCEAS ALLEN.

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PITTSFIELD :

PRINTED BY PHINEAS ALLEN.

Berkshire Agricultural Society.

Oct. 3d, 1816.

Voted, That the Address this day delivered by THOMAS GOLD, Esq. the President of the Society, be requested for publication—and, also, the Address this day delivered by ELKANAH WATSON, Esq. previous to declaring the premiums awarded.

Per Order.

WOLCOTT LAWRENCE, *Secretary.*

Pittsfield, (Mass.) 3d October, 1816.

Sir,

THE members of the BERKSHIRE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY thank you for the highly interesting and excellent Address, which you this day delivered to them, and respectfully request of you a copy of the same for publication.

We have the honor to be,

Most cordially,

Your friends and humble servants,

JOHN W. HULBERT, } *A Special Com-*
TIMOTHY CHILDS, } *mittee of said*
JOHN B. ROOT, } *Society.*

To THOMAS GOLD, Esq. *President of the*
Berkshire Agricultural Society.

Pittsfield, October 4th, 1816.

GENTLEMEN,

The Address I had the honor to deliver, yesterday, before the Berkshire Association for the promotion of Agriculture and Manufactures, is surrendered for publication, as you have requested. The Address was prepared on short notice, and at a time when extremely occupied with professional concerns, solely with a view to promote the important and useful purposes of the Society. It is proper that I solicit the indulgence of the public, and your protection.

I have the honor, Gentlemen,

To remain with perfect esteem and regard,

Your devoted humble servant,

THOMAS GOLD.

Hon. John W. Hulbert, Hon. Timothy Childs,
and John B. Root, Esq.

ADDRESS.

*GENTLEMEN OF THE BERKSHIRE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY,
AND FELLOW-CITIZENS,*

WE are again permitted to assemble to review the events of the past year, which relate to our institution, and to execute the duties which the occasion has imposed. A meeting so interesting and auspicious to human happiness, is not more a subject of joy, than of gratitude, to the great author of nature, who has preserved us, and who has caused his blessings so richly to descend on us, individually, and socially ; and who has inspired us to devote our best services to render the cultivation of the earth more fruitful, and the condition of man more independent and happy. Five years have elapsed since this institution was incorporated, and we this day witness the sixth celebration which the Society has caused to be observed. During this period, the Society has faithfully and zealously pursued the objects committed to its trust. With what success our labors have been crowned, with what value public opinion has stamped them, may be seen in the rapid increase of the fruits of agriculture, and the rise and progress of manufactures. Public fame has done justice to your pretensions, and your fellow-citizens are gathering a rich and glorious reward in the prosperity of this highly favored county. The constitution of our Commonwealth has made it the duty of the legislature, "to encourage private societies, and public institutions, to grant rewards and immunities for the promotion of agriculture, arts, sciences, common trades, manufactures, and a natural history of the country." The legislature on whom these duties were imposed have delegated to you, the power of performing on the small

scale, what it was proper for them long since to have attempted on the great theatre of the Commonwealth. It is a subject of regret, that the rulers of freemen should have delayed so long to devise a system, effectually to execute this constitutional injunction. The rewards and encouragements bestowed by societies acting under limited delegated powers, and with inconsiderable means, shew what mighty effects could have been produced, had legislative wisdom and liberality been directed by more fortunate auspices. It is not less a mark of good sense, and provident care, in the conductors of a government, to stimulate the people by suitable rewards to increase the treasures and resources of agriculture and manufactures, than to frame good laws for the protection of life, liberty and property. A sentiment so favorable to private independence, and the increase of public power, has seldom been felt, and never sufficiently realized. Hence we observe the condition of a nation, its advance or its decline, its rapid, or its retarded march towards its destined perfection. The state of agriculture and the extent of manufactures, determine the strength, and the commercial prosperity of a state. If the legislature of a country encourage the people, by a system of ways and means, to acquire a more ready and ample subsistence, and open to them the way to opulence, they soon become attached to their soil, and a passion for their local habitation and country becomes habitual, and produces content. Thus cherished, and accommodated by a government devoted to their happiness, no spirit of restlessness invades their peaceful homes, and no vagrant disposition impels them to search for new and distant countries. The spirit of emigration, the plague and the misfortune of New-England would become extinct. For forty years the spirit of emigration has exhausted this prolific region, to accumulate strength, and wealth, and glory, to distant states. Happily the public feeling is becoming less torpid, and the public eye clearer sighted on this momentous subject. The legislature of this Commonwealth manifests a solicitude to check this growing evil. The remedy is obvious. Obey the consti-

tutional injunction, "encourage private societies and public institutions, by rewards and immunities for the promotion of agriculture and manufactures." Holding the responsible station which your favor has assigned, it is an incumbent duty, annually, to present this subject for public consideration; and it is not a less imperious duty, on the members of this institution to cherish these sentiments, and to diffuse them abroad amongst the people, that the whole community may be awakened to a sense of their condition and future prospects.

The duties of the day require me to review the events and transactions which have happened since the foundation of the society, that relate to agriculture and manufactures, the legitimate objects of the institution. In executing this task, I shall be allowed by your indulgence to ask your attention to such topics as concern the general welfare of this institution, rather than to details of rural management. If we had the leisure to prepare an appropriate lecture on the composition of our soils; on experiments to ascertain their native fitness for various modes of cultivation, and crops; on the nature and preparation of manures; on the rearing and managing of our domestic animals; on the means of rendering farms more fruitful; on the various species of sustenance composing the vegetable creation; on the planting, rearing and preservation of fruit and forest trees; on materials for manufactures and the measures to promote them, it might well be doubted whether this be a fit occasion for such a display. Respect for my audience, and sincere concern for the welfare of the Society, induce me to omit these topics, and devote myself to other considerations which the crisis imperiously demands.

Gentlemen of the Society, you will allow me to remark, that the details alluded to constitute the appropriate employment of the Society, on occasions expressly assigned for corporate meetings; and you will permit me to add, that a sense of duty and an enlightened zeal for our cause, demand a better organi-

zed arrangement for the execution of these duties.— The honor and the prosperity of the institution require that there should be at least semi-annual meetings of the members, for the express purpose of analytical enquiries into the subjects of the trust ; for collecting experiments ; for receiving projects ; and finally, arranging them for public use. The views of the Society cannot be answered short of such an arrangement. The good we aim at will never be effected unless the fruits of these labors are placed in the hands of our fellow-citizens.— Through that medium, information will be conveyed to all. The result will be a general excitement, a general enquiry, and a series of valuable experiments. Gentlemen, the great object is to combine theory and practice. Thro' this ordeal information may be transmitted to the community that shall merit confidence.

The course prescribed to myself, excites a diffidence for its execution, and I shall repose much on the indulgence of my respected audience. The short time since it has been my duty to address you, together with almost constant professional engagements, justly awaken solicitude, and will deprive my hearers of much of that entertainment which they have a right to expect. This Society had its origin in the praise-worthy project of improving the condition of agriculture, and awakening our fellow-citizens to exertions for prosecuting manufactures. The agriculture of the county had become stationary, and the spirit of improvement nearly extinct. Few inducements remained to cherish enterprize, or occupy industry and talents.— The spirit of emigration was every where in activity, and the census of the county painfully admonished us, that a too general disposition prevailed of seeking asylums in the western region of our country. It was at this crisis the Society commenced the novel and interesting experiment, of exciting the people of the county to examine their situations, to explore the resources of their soils, and to commence improvements that ensured success and profit.

The spirit and energy of the people gloriously sus-

tained the projects submitted for experiment. The annual returns of the Committees on agriculture furnish conclusive evidence that their farms are subjected to better management; the products more abundant, and more estimable for their quality. The dairy department has received valuable improvements, and commands better prices. The cattle have become more select, and preferable for our rearing.— The subject of sheep has been pursued with an intelligence and utility never surpassed. Our grass-fed swine, the humble tenants of the earth, are an acquisition of no small value to a country where heretofore they were reared with expence, and often with sacrifice. Experience continues to recommend, with increasing interest, the use of ashes and lime, of gypsum, or plaister, and marls, as manures; and their fitness to our soils. The present year, plaister has not so uniformly produced the effects usually ascribed to it. The presence of so much cold weather, and the absence of the usual moisture of the earth, have rendered plaister less operative. It appears from this fact that considerable heat and moisture are requisite to give effect to the principle by which it has in a singular manner affected vegetation. The recent discovery of marls in the county, and particularly in Pittsfield, is an important event in rural history. It is found in several places, in sufficient quantities, and is a most valuable manure, being adapted to a more general use than plaister.

The search for an article, so necessary to prosperous husbandry, should be continued; and let it be remembered, that it is not fit for use, unless dug in autumn, and exposed to the frosts of winter. A laudable attention to the preservation of our forests, and wood, and their increase is discovered. And it is with pleasure we observe the numerous plantings of the sugar maple, a tree most easily raised, and of great value. The Society have particularly recommended the propagation of this tree, by a liberal premium. And when it is recollected that the produce of this tree, in the United States, constitutes one seventh part of

the sugar consumed, and exceeds ten millions of pounds, and of the value of twelve hundred thousand dollars, it forms a prominent object in rural economy.

The subject of manufactures presents to us many interesting considerations. In the year 1811, the condition of manufactures in this county, was desolate and hopeless. The most we could boast of, was an indifferent supply of coarse and imperfect household fabrics. These small beginnings were indications of successful progress, and an earnest of what spirit and energy would eventually effect. The attempt was made, and the event has realized all our anticipations. The period at which this experiment commenced was favorable, and numerous occurrences conspired to create confidence.

Desolating wars raging in Europe, and the prostration of the laws which commonly protected neutral commerce, concurred to accelerate this enterprize. The consequences were such as to excite an almost instantaneous enquiry into the natural resources of the country, and the ability to apply them to useful purposes.

Such was the result, that in the autumn of the year 1815, the county was one general display of household manufactures, and also contained twenty-one woollen and six cotton manufacturing establishments, of various extent and value. Also, an extensive manufactory for sail cloth, from which the American Navy, in the proud days of her triumph, had respectable supplies. There is also in this town an excellent establishment for the manufacture of fire arms, supplied with most valuable machinery, of the latest improvements, and is conducted with skill and effect. These establishments have employed a large capital, and many artizans. At present they do not operate so extensively as they have done, and must be contented to move under a restricted management, until our government shall be able to devise a more efficient protection for them. In these great, and most useful improvements, so honorable and valuable to the county,

this Society have acted a distinguished part. It is no mark of vanity to say, that this Society, by their premiums and encouragements stimulated the enterprize, and, by their perseverance, have created confidence in the doubting, and spirit in all. The impression is permanent, and no obstacles can long detain Berkshire from ranking high on the roll of distinguished merit.

It is true that the present time is not without its embarrassments. The prospects are obscured by incidents, which depend not on the wisdom or prudence of man. The seasons and their effects on human labor, are in the disposition of the Most High, who will order every event in perfect wisdom. The productions of the earth, however, in many places, are abundant and uncommon. Distinguished mercies are intermingled with judgments. But in nothing are embarrassments so severely felt, as in that of our commercial relations. For twenty years, the U. States enjoyed almost exclusively, the navigation and commerce of Europe, as well as of America. During this period, the accumulation of capital, and extent of business, was unparalleled ; and produced changes in society, proportioned to such astonishing causes.

The return of a general peace, arrested this successful course of affairs, and produced sudden revolutions in commerce and agriculture ; and now astonishment, doubt and depression seem alone to remain as the successors of the former state of prosperity, ease, and contentment. Not only has this great revolution in our affairs taken place, but even the prospect of retaining any considerable share of our former navigation and commerce is questionable : and we see on every quarter, business restricted, and enterprize deprived of its legitimate pursuits.

In every country, we behold the government devoted to the cultivation of their own resources, and determined that their exclusive success shall occupy all their care and protection. The U. States have nothing to hope, and nothing to fear. The road is open

for our government to prosecute the same wise measures. We will not believe that our statesmen are insensible to this state of human affairs, or that they will be deaf to the claims which the crisis renders imperious, and which patriotism sanctifies. These occurrences lead us to remark, that in such periods, the labors and exertions of institutions like ours, are perceived to be most useful. They are guides to direct the enquirer to the means of relief. They encourage the desponding, animate the doubting, and scatter knowledge among all ranks of people. They stimulate to enterprize, and open the way to success. The utility of their works, commands confidence ; and the fruits of their researches and sacrifices, become a rich harvest of blessings to the world.

With impressions warranted by constant experience, may we not anxiously enquire why a larger number of our fellow-citizens of Berkshire have not openly attached themselves to this institution, and by acts of liberality proportioned to the merits of the cause, become its avowed patrons ? Let me ask, why there should be in Berkshire a single respectable farmer or manufacturer, unconcerned for the welfare of this institution ? It was created for their advantage, it has been sustained for their benefit, and its views all harmonize with, and cherish the prominent interests of the county. Is there not, then, a sufficient motive to induce all to co-operate ?

Fellow-citizens, this institution is numbered in the first order of your blessings. Shall it be in jeopardy for the want of your support ? Are you contented to behold a heavy debt of gratitude accumulating from year to year, to the few, generous, enlightened and benevolent men, who have so long by their labors and pecuniary sacrifices, sustained your honor, and reared a name for Berkshire, that shall be transmitted to other times, with increasing glory. Fellow-citizens of Berkshire, let me entreat you no longer to indulge apathy, or indifference ; but come forward with your counsels, and your pecuniary aids, to sustain a Socie-

ty, peculiarly committed to your protection. On this occasion, the language of wisdom is prophetic and impressive. Our Almighty Benefactor has never promised a blessing to the idle steward, of the treasures committed to his care.

The peculiar influence of distinguished individuals in promoting the benevolent views of this institution, merit to be recognized at every returning anniversary. Good works will receive as they merit the applause of all men. Among our benefactors, none stand more conspicuous than the worthy and patriotic gentleman, who is justly stiled the founder of the institution, and his successor, whose liberality and industry in promoting its welfare, have been distinguished. May the recollection of their counsels, and the value of their examples, be cherished by the members of the Society, and repaid with gratitude and respect.

Among the events which have distinguished the Berkshire Association, none has been more interesting and valuable than the decided support received from the female portion of society. On every occasion it is due to them to declare, their example has been conspicuous, and their exertions prompt and efficient. During the progress of the Society, the ladies have not been more admired for industry, than for the variety, taste, and ingenious execution of useful and valuable fabrics. They have essentially increased the means of social happiness, and have established new claims to the admiration and devotion of the other sex. They have excited a spirit of enterprize, and exemplary industry, and they have arisen above the prejudices which idleness and fancied distinction attached to useful employment. It is settled that *the dignity and excellence of female character is not diminished by exertions of industry—that distinction in society has no legitimate foundation, but the good diffused—that a life of amusement is the bane of virtue, and of honor—and a day spent to no useful purpose, a subject of regret.* In fine, the ladies of Berkshire have reclaimed the properties, and merit that meed of praise, which

Solomon, the wisest man of his time, awarded to the sex of that day—"They will do good and not evil all the days of their lives. They seek the wool and the flax, and work willingly with their hands. They make themselves coverings of tapestry. Their clothing is silk and purple. Their husbands are known in the gates, when they sit among the elders of the land.—*Strength and honor are their clothing*"—"they shall rejoice in time to come."

I have now, my respected auditory, rapidly reviewed the chief events and transactions in relation to the agriculture and manufactures of the county. Having observed these local occurrences, we cannot dismiss the subject, without considering what has been doing elsewhere. The example of this association, its novel manner, its practical usefulness, have given an impulse to public speculations which are fast maturing to a state of systematic usefulness. In this Commonwealth, public attention is awaking to a knowledge of their condition and their future prospects; and we are encouraged to hope the legislature will zealously and sincerely resume the enquiry, what ought to be done, and what is practicable, for the greater encouragement of our agriculture and manufactures?

Among the important institutions for advancing the general happiness, none is more conspicuous than the *Massachusetts Society for the promotion of Agriculture*. This institution has long maintained a distinguished reputation for its researches, essays and valuable collections on rural affairs. They have manifested an exemplary liberality in offering rewards and encouragements for useful improvements, and this year, they are attempting a new and more effectual excitement, by directing a show of animals at Brighton, near Boston. This is well, so far as it goes. It is far short of utility. The worthy and learned President of that institution has expressed his approbation of your measures, and his admiration of their success; and he has requested me, gentlemen, to offer you the testimony of respect and best wishes of that institu-

tion, for the prosperity of a Society so “extensively useful as yours.”

The respectable state of New-York has adopted this Society as their model, and they are forming several institutions resembling this. And within a few days past, we have had an application from the state of Kentucky, requesting our assistance to enable them to form a society like our own. The application has been complied with. The state of Connecticut, also, has this month, for the first time, beheld an association of eminent men of that state, assembled to promote their agriculture and manufactures. This novel exhibition took place at the city of New-Haven, under the patronage of a revered revolutionary patriot and statesman, by whom they were addressed.— Thus we behold the spirit of improvement in active operation, in several important sections of the country. These occurrences should confirm us in the correctness of our views, and should stimulate us to unabated perseverance.

While we reflect with pleasure, and with gratitude, on these propitious events, the Society should not rest satisfied with the enlightened and benevolent views of the past time. Greater prosperity and more extensive usefulness are before them. That these prospects may not become illusory, or momentary in effect, I ask permission to recommend, gentlemen of the Society and fellow-citizens, the advantages of collecting books on agriculture and manufactures; on the diseases of all domestic animals, and their remedies; and on all the improvements which ancient and modern times have consecrated to the prosperity of man.— These researches would excite a spirit of enquiry and a passion for reading, which would diffuse through our ranks important social advantages. Pleasure and profit would walk hand in hand, and we should witness among the risen, and rising generation, that *polish of mind, and those treasures of knowledge, which commend man to man, and exalt him to the first moral distinction, as he is elevated by the tenor of his rights, to the enviable rank of lord of the soil he cultivates.*

GENTLEMEN OF THE SOCIETY,

Before we separate, the occasion requires that I suggest for your consideration several matters, that merit examination and experiment. It is apparrent for several years past, that our husbandry has been inclining to grazing rather than to tillage. The high price of labor, has unquestionably contributed chiefly to this change. The consequence is a diminution of the products of tillage, and a gradual rise of the prices in the market. Hence this county, as well fitted by nature for the production of white crops as any other in the same latitude, has annually sent abroad large sums of money for flour and grain.

During this period, the population of the county has considerably increased, and of that population a larger proportion has exchanged its employments in agriculture for manufacturing. These changes have not sufficiently attracted attention. The period has arrived, when the interest and prosperity of the county demand, that our rural concerns should be conformed to this new state of society. It is precisely the course of events which has happened in every country in its progressive advancement, through the various stages of improvement; and at such a period, and in such a state of things, good sense, which always leads to correct results, has discovered and applied the remedy. It consists in varying the husbandry from grazing to tillage, and adopting a free use of the plow, attended with ample manuring, a rotation of crops, and faithfully stocking the land with suitable grasses. This course will furnish a complete remedy for the privations and losses attending the pastoral state of farming. Experience has demonstrated, that by no other course can a numerous population be sustained, manufactures be prospered, or any considerable commerce be expected. These remarks are all exemplified in the kingdom of Great Britain, where tillage is advanced of every other country, and sustains a wonderful and increasing population, and is made the basis of the most extensive manufactures

and commerce, which the world ever witnessed.— There agricultural employments hold the most elevated rank in public opinion. The most noble and distinguished men are its patrons. The nobles of the land take the lead in their numerous and highly esteemed associations, for the promotion of these greatest national interests. Do we, gentlemen, possess less public spirit? Have we less sensibility to the best interests of this county?

The time allowed me will not permit the pursuit of this subject through all its relations; especially in what concerns the grasses proper for this soil and climate, and the most approved implements of cultivation. These subjects I recommend to your faithful consideration, and to experiments that may test their utility.

There yet remains a subject of the greatest possible interest to this county, about which much delusion and error have commenced their destructive career. You will perceive I allude to our sheep. This animal has always occupied the first consideration, in the enumeration of articles of convenience or necessity.— If we consider the subject, as it relates to domestic economy, or agricultural prosperity, or the source of commercial supplies, or the basis of individual and national opulence and independence, it acquires the greatest interest, and merits the most decided and persevering support. On this occasion, it cannot be expected, that I should occupy your attention with details of their comparative profit, their peculiar fitness to our country and course of husbandry, and of the superior advantages derived to our hill country, from multiplying this esteemed animal.

These details I recommend to your sober and careful examination. Treat the subject dispassionately, and the result will correct error, and dissipate all delusion. In every country where man has existed and multiplied since the days of the shepherds of Judea, to this time, sheep have been considered as necessary

to civilized society, and a source of incalculable profit. On what foundation then rests the prejudice and clamor, so inconsiderately exercised towards this most inoffensive of animals. Has it any foundation, but the accidental occurrence of one or two unpropitious seasons, by which the products of agriculture have been diminished, and the expence of sustaining them increased? Does it rest on the scanty supplies of grain, and the enhanced price of the dairy? If so, the evil will soon be corrected. Another season will, probably, restore agriculture to its usual prosperity, and the return to an efficient course of tillage husbandry, will remove all other grounds of complaint. Thus it is readily perceived, the objections to sheep are casual, and of short duration.

The increasing demand for wool, for the immediate supply of the people of the U. States, is greater than some imagine; and it will soon command a price beyond the relative value of other objects of agriculture. If the people of the United States, like those of England, (true to themselves) would endeavor to raise the wool necessary for their home supply, the quantity would probably equal fifty millions of pounds, requiring at least sixteen millions of sheep to supply the demand. It is probable, at the present time, that the wool and sheep of the U. States, do not exceed the quantity sufficient to supply more than one half of the above amount. Here, then, is a prospect sufficiently encouraging to the American agriculturalist, especially when we take into the account that foreign wools are subject to a duty of fifteen cents on the pound, and foreign woollens to a duty of twenty-five per centum. These causes cannot fail in due time to produce an ample compensation to all growers of wool.

The same enlightened spirit, which commenced this system of protection for American wool and manufactures, will never cease its vigilance and activity, until these great interests are placed out of jeopardy. Taking it for granted, that this view of the subject will repress the complaints against sheep, I feel it an

imperious duty to urge my fellow-citizens to persevere vigorously in this part of their rural employments. The merino sheep, so invaluable and requisite in all fine cloth fabrics, maintain the reputation acquired, and merit increasing confidence. The comparative profit of these sheep is great, and although their nominal value has declined, their present value is sufficient to stimulate to the most active exertions in rearing them. However much it is the interest of the county to give these animals the decided preference, it is proper that our native races of sheep should not be forgotten. In all common and household manufactures they deserve to be held in great estimation.— Permit me to urge more care in selecting and rearing of this native stock. It will amply repay the labor and expence.

And I cannot dismiss this subject without recommending to your notice the remarkable fine race of sheep, which, for several years, have been reared by Asahel Pomroy, Esq. of Northampton. For beauty, size, and good quality of wool, they surpass all our native sheep. Much has been said of the Virginia, Arlington, and Smith Island sheep. They are pronounced by good judges as little inferior in value to the far famed merino. It is hoped, that shortly we shall be able to procure enough of these races to make an experiment, that will decide their utility and fitness for this climate.

GENTLEMEN—The United States possess two great and leading interests, those of agriculture and manufactures. All other interests are subordinate and dependent on these. The former was the early pursuit of our venerable forefathers, their chief resource, and the last and surest reliance of posterity. Manufactures became an object of patronage with the framers of the present Constitution of the United States. The first acts of the government recognized their importance, and identified their existence and prosperity with the policy adopted to sustain the destiny of a great nation.

To fix their importance and create public sensibility, the first President of the United States, the immortal WASHINGTON, appeared, on the day of his inauguration, in a full suit of American manufacture. This timely display of patriotism was soon followed by a report on this very interesting subject, by the great and ever-lamented HAMILTON.

From that day to the present time, the Presidents, in succession, have never failed to place this great subject before their countrymen, in language of decided approbation ; and it is due to the present President of the United States, to declare that the agricultural and manufacturing interests of the nation, have uniformly been encouraged, by him, and received his decided support. In the success of these great interests, this country has an immense value at stake. During the last session of Congress, this important cause was gloriously sustained, by a distinguished band of patriotic representatives. In that difficult and arduous controversy the worthy representative of this district powerfully advocated the interests of his constituents, and merits their gratitude.

FELLOW-CITIZENS—The important duties, assigned to my discharge this day, have led me to occupy your attention, perhaps, too long. To some the subjects may appear distant and uninteresting ; to others combining too little of fancy, and elegant speculation, to excite the feelings of the heart, or produce the charm of amusement. Anxious to acquit myself usefully of the trust reposed, I have attempted to present to you, those considerations, which demand your more particular attention. On their success depends our happiness, and the prosperity and glory of our country. I have this day experienced an elevated pleasure in pursuing a course near to my heart, and for your indulgence I am grateful.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SOCIETY,

Before we separate, let me appeal to your pa-

triotism, and to the sensibility of interest, to engage you zealously and perseveringly to espouse, support, and execute the great and benevolent purposes of this institution. It is with pride and respect that I have announced your meritorious exertions and sacrifices, during the period of your association. These benevolent labors, shall shed blessings on your country, and will be rewarded by the grateful homage of the present and future generations.

MR. WATSON'S ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,

I am again invited to proclaim your premiums—Also, to offer some preliminary remarks on this auspicious occasion.

After my removal from this State, I little expected this new proof of honor and confidence—I meet the compliment with sensations of gratitude. Following the interesting and excellent communication of your President, just delivered, it would be preposterous and improper that I should attempt any general observations on the subjects of agriculture and manufactures, the promotion of which are the exclusive objects of your novel and interesting association.

My only object in addressing to you a *few words*, is again to express my undiminished zeal for your prosperity and happiness, and to endeavor to impress on your minds the vast importance of continuing your labors.

Your measures, my friends, (with whom I have been so long accustomed to act in this pleasing and useful employment) are considered by the American nation, not as localized, or identified with the immediate interests of Pittsfield—or Berkshire—or Massachusetts.—No, Gentlemen, I can now say with pride and with pleasure, the eyes of America are fixed on your patriotic course with anxious solicitude. For some weeks past, we find the public papers from Maine to Georgia—from the Atlantic to the Mississippi—all teeming in the praises of your Society, and holding it up to view as worthy of general imitation. Several Agricultural Societies are recently organized—others in contemplation—and all avowedly on your model. It will, also, be peculiarly grateful to every member of this glorious Society, to know that the mother Society of this State is following *your foot-steps* in their first Cattle Show, to be exhibited the ensuing week at Brighton.—They are blessed with an overflowing treasury, and have, *at length*, evinced a disposition to appropriate a *small portion of their income*, to excite a laudable spirit of emulation in the vicinity of the capital. Your exemplary measures are considered national, since their influence is extended into every section of this great republic.

It is a singular fact, and ought not to be concealed—the farther you recede from this centre, which invigorates and gives

life and animation to your annual exhibitions, into the most distant points of the union, the more your patriotic exertions are appreciated. With these truths in view, and in a full knowledge how far this immediate community have been benefitted by the visible and increasing good effects resulting from a laudable excitement in every direction ; every farmer in this country must be *dead* to his own interest, *dead* to the honor of Berkshire, not to contribute his mite to a general fund, on which, alone, must depend the existence of this society.

Some have supposed it indispensable that a literary character should always preside over this institution. This is a mistake. Since it is not necessary a formal address should be annually made. Any plain, respectable farmer, of sound information, of enlarged and liberal views, can with equal propriety discharge the necessary functions, by an annual communication, simply confined to your progressive improvements in agriculture and manufactures, to be read by your Secretary, and published for general information. Since practical experiments are the essential points in view, the more simple your future course, and the less ostentatious, the greater will be popular confidence.

The only effectual measure to keep your wheels in motion is to *oil them*. Oil them, by an exact punctuality in your voluntary engagements. A few annual drops of this oil, from each farmer, will, I stand pledged, eventually *overspread* this country with wealth and happiness.

To ensure with greater certainty the necessary funds, perhaps it may be found expedient and proper to reduce the number of your premiums, and in the same view to confine them, in each successive year, alternately, either to Agriculture or to Manufactures exclusively. The present distressed situation of this country and England, is full evidence that we must fall back on our native resources, to a certain point. Although the shelves of our merchants, and the stores of our Custom-Houses, are loaded with foreign manufactures, estimated at the frightful sum of 200 millions of dollars, and selling at half their intrinsic value—although we are standing on the verge of a precipice, which threatens universal desolation in the mercantile and manufacturing world, yet it is grateful to the patriot's eye, to see so large a proportion of this respectable assemblage clad in homespun, on the increase of which, we must eventually build our prosperity—our *substantial independence*. In a word, my friends, we must practice the salutary lesson of economy—we must retrace the humble footsteps of our ancestors, or be *enslaved to our creditors at home and abroad*. The only pride of our females in these gloomy times (and much depends on their example) should be, to be attired in the works of their own hands, and to see their fathers, their husbands, their brothers, nay, their *sweet-hearts*, marching by their sides, clothed in *homespun* also, of their own making.* [See Note, 22d page.]

We must buy less—make more—holding credit as the bane and curse of this community—thus, also, holding the lawyers and sheriffs *at defiance*. Every freeman would then rest in peace under his own vine, and walk erect, with a firm and manly step, on the blessed soil of America, truly the lords of the creation. Should your labors produce these glorious results, your names will stand immortalized, and future generations who stroll in church-yards, may read on your tombs this proud but simple epitaph—

*Here lies a member of the first Berkshire Agricultural Society—
May generations yet unborn learn, by his example, to love their country.*

On the other hand, if this Society must perish, all farther efforts on this scale will be deadened for a century to come. But you will always have the consolation of knowing, that you are entitled to the eternal gratitude of Berkshire—that you have kept your feet firm on the stiff neck of party spirit—that you have held the monster down—hence your prosperity. That you have struggled year after year, performing a great national object, deprived of funds, or legislative patronage ; and yet, by a *miracle*, as it were, you have commanded both respect and success. My friends, you have a solemn charge committed to your hands—since as on the successful result of your example, numerous Agricultural Societies will yet arise to bless the land, or be repressed by your fall. With these remarks, and imploring Heaven's blessings to crown your patriotic efforts with merited success, I will again proceed to the remaining duty assigned to me.

Note.—Here the venerable Orator turned towards the north gallery, which was exclusively appropriated to a beautiful collection of Ladies—female singers included—and the delighted audience spontaneously applauded. The effect may be better conceived than described.—*Ed. Sun.*]

REPORT ON AGRICULTURE.

The Committee of the Berkshire Agricultural Society appointed for viewing crops standing in the fields, have faithfully attended to the discharge of their important trust, and beg leave, respectfully, to REPORT :

That they noticed with peculiar pleasure a growing attention to improvements in Agriculture in every part of the County, where their duty called them. which was highly gratifying to them, especially as it was manifest that these interesting results of our enquiries were principally owing to the effects of your Society, in diffusing a laudable spirit of emulation among our farmers, which has stimulated a general ambition to excel, not only in raising good crops, but keeping buildings and fences in better repair. It is, therefore, our earnest wish and entreaty, that the members of the Society, and the community at large, will contribute liberally to the support of an institution so eminently calculated to do good to the whole country.

We will not, on this occasion, trespass on the time of the public by going into detail as to the best method of fencing, of collecting and creating manures, or of raising and preserving fruit trees, and many other objects interesting to every farmer. At the same time we beg leave strongly to recommend a general attention to these interesting objects, that the Society and posterity may derive knowledge and benefit from our experience.

Your Committee cannot refrain from expressing their deep sense of gratitude and praise to Almighty GOD, in blessing this people with such abundant crops of wheat, rye, oats, flax and peas ; notwithstanding the uncommon cold, and severe drought, they were never greater. Indian corn having, for the same reasons, generally failed, the applicants for premiums on that article, generously waved their pretensions, and are entitled to the thanks of the Society. The candidates were numerous, and had the season been favorable, the whole community would have been sensible of the visible effects of your premiums.

On the suggestion of the President, your Committee examined a mill erected by Capt. Merrill's, for grinding Plaister of Paris, on an extensive scale ; and they beg leave to recommend it, from its promised utility, as an object worthy of a premium.

By order of the Viewing Committee of Agriculture.

JOEL BRADLEY, *Chairman.*

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